In the Claims

1.   (Currently amended) A method for handling jobs within a computer system, comprising ~~the steps of~~:

~~providing~~ in response to a request for a job to be performed, generating a ~~plurality of~~ work ~~items, each work~~ item representing ~~a~~ the job to be performed, ~~each~~ the work item ~~including~~ comprising a category, a state, ~~and~~ a change history, and a description of the job represented by the work item, the job comprising a customer-generated request;

placing ~~each~~ the work item into a particular queue in ~~one of~~ a plurality of queues based at least in part on the category of the work item, each queue in the plurality of queues being for storing work items representing jobs to be performed;

in turn, opening ~~each~~ the work item in ~~a~~ the particular queue in response to a request from a business process, and executing one or more tasks on the work item, each task being for resolving at least a portion of the job represented by the work item by resolving at least a portion of the customer-generated request; and

after executing the one or more tasks on the work item:~~,~~

modifying the state of the work item in response to execution of the one or more tasks;

updating the change history of the work item in response to execution of the one or more tasks;

if the job represented by ~~a~~ the work item is complete, archiving the work ~~item,~~ item; and

if the job represented by the work item is not yet complete, placing the work item into ~~a queue~~ one of the plurality of queues based at least in part on one or more tasks to be executed on the work item.

2.   (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein ~~the step of~~ executing a task ~~includes the step of~~ comprises modifying the work item.

1   3.   (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein ~~the step of~~ executing a

2   task ~~includes the step of~~ comprises one or more of:

3   sending an e-mail to a person; and

4   sending a fax to a person.

1   4.   (Canceled)

1   5.   (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein ~~the step of~~ executing a

2   task ~~includes the step of~~ comprises moving the work item to a queue different from its present

3   queue.

1   6.   (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein ~~the step of~~ executing

2   one or more tasks comprises ~~the steps of~~:

3   invoking one or more ~~providing a plurality of~~ composite actions, each of the one or

4   more composite ~~action~~ actions including a rule and at least one task to be executed as a result

5   of evaluation of the rule;

6   evaluating the rule ~~for a~~ for each of the one or more composite ~~action~~ actions; and

7   executing the task corresponding to the evaluation of the rule.

1   7.   (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein the work ~~items each~~

2   item further ~~include~~ comprises an identification of a party that created the work item.

1   8.   (Canceled)

1   9.   (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein the work ~~items each~~

2   item further ~~include~~ comprises a due date for the work item indicating when the job

3   represented by the work item should be resolved.

1   10.   (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein the work ~~items each~~

2   item further ~~include~~ comprises a current location for the work item, the current location for

3   the work item identifying the queue in which the work item has been placed.

1   11.   (Currently amended) A system for handling jobs within a computer system,

2 comprising:

3   one or more memory units operable to store a plurality of queues, each queue in the

4 plurality of queues being for storing one or more work items; and

5   one or more processing units collectively operable to:

6   generate, in response to receiving a request for a job to be performed, a

7 ~~plurality of~~ work ~~items, each~~ item representing ~~a job~~ the job to be performed, ~~each~~ the work

8 item ~~having~~ comprising a category, a state, ~~and~~ a history, and a description of the job

9 represented by the work item;

10   place the work item into a particular queue in the plurality of queues based at

11 least in part on the category of the work item, each queue in the plurality of queues for

12 storing work items representing jobs to be performed;

13   in turn, open the work item in the particular queue in response to a request

14 from a business process, and executing one or more tasks on the work item, each task being

15 for resolving at least a portion of the job represented by the work item; and

16   after executing the one or more tasks on the work item:~~,~~

17   modify the state of the work item in response to execution of the one or

18 more tasks;

19   update the change history of the work item in response to execution of

20 the one or more tasks;

21   archive the work item if the job represented by the work item is

22 complete; and

23   place the work item into one of the plurality of queues based at least in

24 part on one or more tasks to be executed on the work item if the job represented by the work

25 item is not yet complete;

26   ~~a plurality of composite actions, each defining one or more tasks to be executed with~~

27 ~~respect to a work item.~~

1   12. (Currently amended) The system of Claim 11, wherein <u>the one or more</u>

2 <u>processing units execute at least one task by invoking one or more</u> ~~each~~ composite ~~action~~

3 <u>actions, each composite action being stored in the one or more memory units and comprising:</u>

4 ~~includes~~

5   a rule to be ~~evaluated,~~ <u>evaluated;</u> and

6   at least ~~two sets of tasks~~ <u>one task</u> to be performed ~~depending on the outcome~~

7 ~~of the evaluation~~ <u>executed as a result of evaluation of the rule</u>.

1   13. (Original) The system of Claim 12, wherein the rule evaluates to a value of

2 true or false.

1   14. (Currently amended) The system of Claim 13, further ~~including~~ <u>comprising</u> a

2 set of rules to be evaluated if there is no rule to be evaluated.

1   15. (Currently amended) The system of Claim 11, wherein the work ~~items each~~

2 further ~~include~~ <u>comprises</u> an identification of a party that created the work item.

1   16. (Canceled)

1   17. (Currently amended) The system of Claim 11, wherein the work ~~items each~~

2 <u>item</u> further ~~include~~ <u>comprises</u> a due date for the work item <u>indicating when the job</u>

3 <u>represented by the work item should be resolved</u>.

1   18. (Currently amended) The system of Claim 11, wherein the work ~~items each~~

2 <u>item</u> further ~~include~~ <u>comprises</u> a current location for the work item<u>, the current location for</u>

3 <u>the work item identifying the queue in which the work item has been placed</u>.

1   19. (New) The method of Claim 1, wherein the work item is a computer-

2 implemented object.

1   20. (New) The method of Claim 1, wherein the business process is automated

2 such that the business process automatically opens the work item in the particular queue.

1   21. (New) The method of Claim 1, wherein the work item persists until the job

2 represented by the work item is completed.

1   22.   (New) The method of Claim 1, wherein the state of the work item comprises

2   one or more of:

3   an open state indicating that the work item is currently opened by a business

4   process and is currently not available to be opened by another business process; and

5   a closed state indicating that the work item is waiting in its associated queue

6   for one or more tasks to be performed on the work item by a business process.

1   23.   (New) The method of Claim 1, further comprising providing a plurality of

2   composite actions, each composite action comprising:

3   a rule for determining an appropriate action to be performed on the work item;

4   a first set of one or more actions to be performed if the rule evaluates to TRUE; and

5   a second set of one or more actions to be performed if the rule evaluates to FALSE;

6   and

7   wherein executing one or more tasks on the work item comprises invoking one or

8   more of the plurality of composite actions.

1   24.   (New) The method of Claim 23, wherein:

2   each category is associated with a composite action; and

3   the method further comprises, in response to generating a work item, specifying the

4   category of the work item based on the job represented by the work item, a rule associated

5   with the composite action that is associated with the category of the work item determining

6   the particular queue in which the work item should be placed.

1   25.   (New) The method of Claim 1, wherein the job comprises a customer problem

2   associated with a product or service, the job being completed when the customer's problem is

3   resolved.

1   26.   (New) The system of Claim 11, wherein a task comprises modifying the work

2   item.

1   27.   (New) The system of Claim 11, wherein a task comprises one or more of:

2   sending an e-mail to a person; and

3   sending a fax to a person.

1   28.   (New) The system of Claim 11, wherein a task comprises moving the work

2   item to a queue different from its present queue.

1   29.   (New) The system of Claim 11, wherein the work item is a computer-

2   implemented object.

1   30.   (New) The system of Claim 11, wherein the business process is automated

2   such that the business process automatically opens the work item in the particular queue.

1   31.   (New) The system of Claim 11, wherein the work item persists until the job

2   represented by the work item is completed.

1   32.   (New) The system of Claim 11, wherein the state of the work item comprises

2   one or more of:

3   an open state indicating that the work item is currently opened by a business

4   process and is currently not available to be opened by another business process; and

5   a closed state indicating that the work item is waiting in its associated queue

6   for one or more tasks to be performed on the work item by a business process.

1   33.   (New) The system of Claim 11, wherein the one or more memory units store a

2   plurality of composite actions, each composite action comprising:

3   a rule for determining an appropriate action to be performed on the work item;

4   a first set of one or more actions to be performed if the rule evaluates to TRUE; and

5   a second set of one or more actions to be performed if the rule evaluates to FALSE;

6   and

7   wherein the one or more processing units execute one or more tasks on the work item

8   by involving one or more of the plurality of composite actions.

1   34.   (New) The system of Claim 33, wherein:

2   each category is associated with a composite action; and

3   the one or more processing units are further operable to, in response to generating a

4   work item, specify the category of the work item based on the job represented by the work

5   item, a rule associated with the composite action that is associated with the category of the

6   work item determining the particular queue in which the work item should be placed.

1   35.   (New) The system of Claim 11, wherein the job comprises a customer

2   problem associated with a product or service, the job being completed when the customer's

3   problem is resolved.